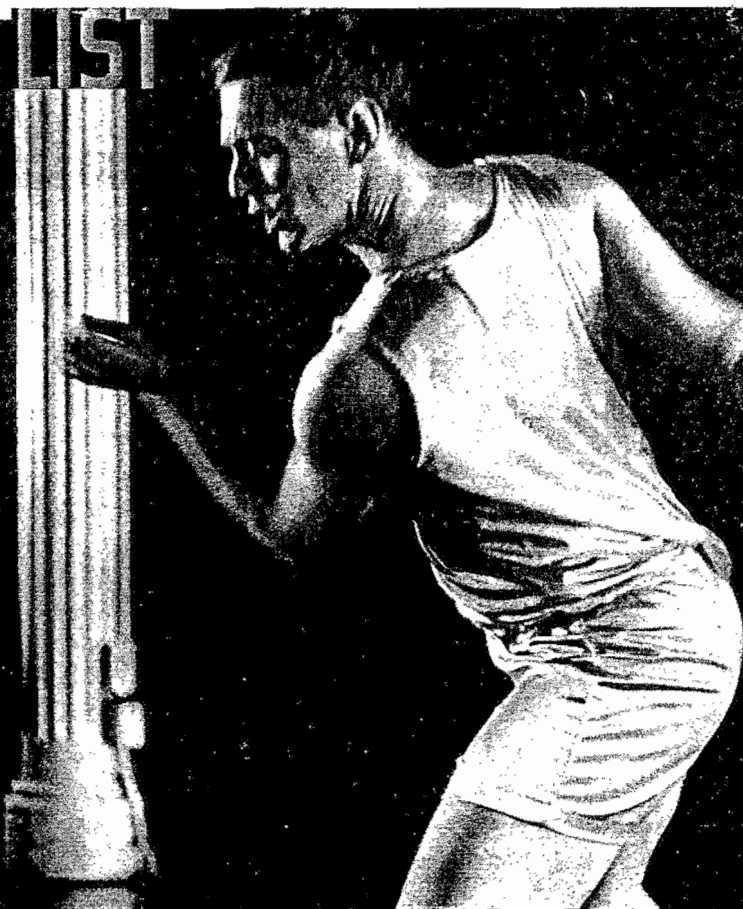


# the village VOICE

## Beyond Normal

### SHORTLIST



In *This Is What Happened*, Neil Greenberg gives audiences a clear pathway into his postmodern dances (see Dance).

### DANCE

**DANCE BY NEIL GREENBERG**  
Greenberg gives audiences a clear pathway into his postmodern dances, posting supertitles on the back wall so you'll know what's going on—or at least what he wants you to know. The new *This Is What Happened*, set to music originally created by Bernard Herrmann for Hitchcock films, he calls a cross between *Rashomon* and *Notorious*; the dancers watch each other in strategically placed mirrors. Thursday through Sunday and May 6 through 9 at 8:30, P.S. 122, 150 First Avenue, 477-5288. (Zimmer)

### Exploring New Mother Tongues

BY DEBORAH JOWITT

**YOU KNOW THOSE** convex mirrors that warn you of suspicious strangers round the bend of the corridor? Neil Greenberg had them positioned in two corners of P.S. 122 for his *This Is What Happened*. Like the snatches of dramatic music from Bernard Herrmann's movie scores, the long silences, and the often bleak lighting by Michael Stiller, the mirrors hint at danger, even though all they reflect are Greenberg, Justine Lynch, and Paige Martin—tiny, skewed, and seen in reverse.

Compared with the wonderful trilogy that began with Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance*, the new piece is austere. There are only three performers. Just a few projected announcements appear on the back wall. But everything conspires to produce the semblance of a story we are not to know. Watching the leggy, attenuated, sometimes brusque or splatty dancing that springs from and deranges a classical base (imagine Merce Cunningham's style put on a diet of beef and red wine), we sense mysteries even in such formal events as a shift from two people dancing in unison to three all doing different things. When Martin performs an assertive solo, we're advised, "Don't believe her. She's lying." The sentence not only ignites narrative, it raises questions about

how we perceive meaning in dance. And when we read, during Lynch's later solo, "Something is happening to her," it only confirms a feeling induced by her long pauses and hurled movement.

But, of course, what's "happening" to all three, separately or together but never touching, is dancing. Dancing in all its ability to evoke states of feeling through suddenly flung-up arms, a gaze toward the corner, the pulling down of a shoulder strap. The formality of Greenberg's construction intersects ironically with life, or with the Hitchcockian filmic abstractions supported by the music. "Flashback" refers simply to a phrase of movement seen earlier and now repeated. But can we know for sure what that phrase does, or does not, mean? **V**